

IN THE DRAWINGS

Applicants have submitted a Request for Approval of Proposed Drawing Correction concurrently herewith, together with a copy of Fig. 10 on which the proposed corrections are indicated in red ink. The only change requested is to change the reference numerals "85" in the figure. to ---89---, to be consistent with the change to the specification above. These changes have been requested since the "tissue retainer" has also been assigned reference numeral 85 as indicated at page 29, line 15 of the Specification. Approval of this proposal is respectfully requested in the next official Action. A clean copy of the drawing is also submitted in anticipation of acceptance of the correction.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 7 and 16, add new claims 20-25 and replace claims 1, 8, 9, 11, 14, and 17 with the following:

1. (Amended) A surgical retractor blade for attaching to a drive mechanism, said retractor blade comprising a body having a first end, a second end, a channel adapted to engage one side of an incision in a patient, said first end having a first cavity adapted to receive a support member extending from said drive mechanism, and a second cavity adapted to receive a second support member extending from said drive mechanism.

2. (Amended) A surgical retractor blade for attaching to a drive mechanism, said retractor blade comprising a body having a first end, a second end, and a channel adapted to engage one side of an incision in a patient, and a curved rail extending along at least a portion of said body.

3. (Amended) A surgical retractor blade for attaching to a drive mechanism, said retractor blade comprising a body having a first end, a second end, a channel adapted to engage one side of an incision in a patient, and a rail extending along at least a portion of said body, wherein said rail has a top portion and a bottom portion, said bottom portion having a narrowed region adjacent said top portion forming

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first and second tabs on said top portion.

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11. (Amended) A surgical retractor blade for attaching to a drive mechanism, said retractor blade comprising a body having a first end, a second end, a channel adapted to engage one side of an incision in a patient, a rail extending along at least a portion of said body, and a plurality of open slots for receiving a suture therein, wherein said open slots have an internal wall and a suture locking member having a fixed end and a free end, said free end engaging said internal wall so as to *clamp* a suture placed between said free ended and said internal wall.

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14. (Amended) A surgical retractor blade for attaching to a drive mechanism, said retractor blade comprising a body having a first end, a second end, a channel adapted to engage one side of an incision in a patient, a rail extending along at least a portion of said body, and a plurality of open slots for receiving a suture therein, wherein at least one of said open slots have a first slot section which bifurcates into a second slot section and a third slot section.

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17. (Amended) A surgical retractor blade for attaching to a drive mechanism, said retractor blade comprising a body having a first end, a second end, a channel adapted to engage one side of an incision in a patient, and a rail extending along at least a portion of said body, wherein said first end has a cavity adapted to receive a support member extending from said drive mechanism.

20. (New) The surgical retractor blade of claim 1, wherein said body comprises a polymer.

21. (New) The surgical retractor blade of claim 8, wherein said body comprises a polymer.

22. (New) The surgical retractor blade of claim 9, wherein said body comprises a polymer.

23. (New) The surgical retractor blade of claim 11, wherein said body comprises a polymer.

24. (New) The surgical retractor blade of claim 14, wherein said body comprises a polymer.

25. (New) The surgical retractor blade of claim 17, wherein said body comprises a polymer.